



A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON RISK FACTORS LEAD TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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ABSTRACT

Future of a country depends upon the effective and sustainable utilization of resources including human resource. In human resource the most productive group in any society is youngsters. Youth is the time of energy, productivity and enthusiasm. If youngster's energy is focused into constructive and creative endeavours that will add to the process of nation building. But the real scenario is disappointing. Younger generation is engaged in many criminal activities rather than in constructive things. The root cause of these trends is increased level of substance abuse. Many awareness programs, policies and legal measures are there to control this, but substance abuse is really a hard thing to kick. It needs a unanimous and tremendous effort from the part of each and every individual of the society. As life became more technology oriented and family relations became money oriented, strength of risk factors that persuade for substance abuse has increased and protecting factors against substance abuse lost their strength. To tackle these issues effectively, an understanding of risk factors leading to substance abuse is essential. Many studies from different countries point out about the factors that lead to substance abuse. The present study is an attempt to identify the risk factors lead to substance abuse in the state of Kerala.

KEY WORDS: Substance Abuse, Risk Factors, Protective Factors.

INTRODUCTION:

According to World Health Organisation, Substance abuse is the harmful or hazardous use of psycho active substances. Government, public, police and excise departments are vigilant and equipped with anti-narcotic laws and measures, then also cases of abuse and illegal selling of substances are being reported. Substance is School going students are still vulnerable to the persuasions that these substances create. Gutka, Ganja, liquor, Chai Khaini and even whiteners are some of the reported substances that are being sold through agents and corner shops nearby schools. When children start such consumption, gradually they start misbehaving with family members, school authorities and peer groups. This will again lead to low curricular and co-curricular performance, low appreciation thus low level of self-esteem, worsened relationships inside and outside the school and family. Banking upon the unreal world created by the addictive substances keep the younger generation away from reality and we lose our societies future hope.

Rationale:

Every behaviour needs a stimulus to initiate the action, could be from within or from the environment. Different research studies done on trigger factors for adolescent addiction behaviour points out that a past history of child abuse in the form of emotional physical or sexual, family problems like domestic violence, parental divorce, absence of parent, substance abusing parent, individual related aspects like low frustration tolerance, low self-esteem, gang affiliation etc. are the triggering factors. Studies show that there exists interrelationship among these factors. The cultural and social setting in which the child lives is also controls individual behaviour. In this context doing a case study to know what are the probable forces or factors that pull-down children to the control of such persuasions seems to be more relevant.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Forster, Myriam; Grigsby, Timothy J.; Bunyan, Alden; Unger, Jennifer Beth; Valente, Thomas William (2015), through their study on protective role of school relationship for substance abuse. It shows that the social self-control image the student attain through having increased gang membership works as a persuading factor. Sullivan, Kristen; Cosden, Merith (2015), conducted a study on High School Risk Factors Associated with Alcohol Trajectories and College Alcohol Use found that high school students with high drinking have academic under achievement.

OBJECTIVES:

To identify risk factors related to substance abuse through interview and case study.

Directional Hypothesis:

Risk factors related to family, community and individual aspects lead to substance abuse

METHODOLOGY:

The research study used qualitative case study of few individuals who reportedly started abusing substances from their school stage. Reports from anti narcotic

clubs of schools were considered. Purposive sampling is done and the purpose of the study was communicated to the parents and to the subjects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Case 1, 14-year-old boy continued education up to sixth grade. Irregular in school, parents were granite quarry workers. Father was alcoholic and smoker. After working hours every day spent his earning for alcohol only, fought with all family members including the boy. By fifth grade onwards he started working as a cleaner in Lorry, transporting granite to the Quarry. As an independent earner he started consuming alcohol and smoking from age twelve. The interviews done with many villagers revealed that Arrack and other foreign liquors were abundant in the village still recent legislative measures to prevent that. Even if alcohol sale and distribution is restricted other substances like tobacco and thambacoo, Chai Khaini are still available.

Case 2, 18 year old boy father was a gulf returned carpenter and mother was a cashew factory worker. The boy was good in studies, sports and all co-curricular activities. Father was drunkard and the family was under critical financial crisis and the father behaved very rudely to the family members. After schooling hours, the boy started working with a tailor as an assistant. The tailor and all persons related to that group were above 40 and alcoholics. The boy started drinking, smoking and using other substances from there. He did not perform well either in academics or in co-curricular areas.

Case 3, 19 year old medical student. Parents are well educated and well placed. Mother was working in distant place and was coming home on weekends only. The boy couldn't tolerate mother's interferences and strict behaviour. He started reacting aggressively by using abusive words and damaging even valuable house hold items. Nearby his house, from a corner shop he was getting some tobacco products. Even during school time he started using it. Due to aggressive behaviour and usage of abusive language to peer, teachers and even to principal the school dismissed the boy.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Analysis of different cases shows that whatever is mentioned in different literature regarding the factors which lead to substance abuse are shown to be true. The investigator identified the following risk factors related to substance abuse from the case analyses.

- Strained family relations
- Strained parent child relations
- Divorce of parents
- Lack of resources
- Over dominating parents
- Substance abusing parents and family members

- Availability of substance
- Community culture that encourages substance abuse.
- Social group in which the child is interacting.
- Lack of monitoring and individualised attention from school system from school.
- Vulnerability to persuasion and lack of persuasion resistance
- Lack of self-control
- Lack of goal orientation
- Ineffective implementation of law and order.

With the support of all the findings derived from case studies and interviews the directional hypothesis formulated for the study is accepted.

CONCLUSION:

Based on all the research studies and reported events a community awareness programme is essential to make family bonding strong, educate parents on necessary parenting skills including acceptance of the individuality of the child without breaking the bond of love and democratic discipline. Not only in urban areas many villages are still have cases of substance abuse among school going students. A curricular approach from the beginning of schooling should be initiated to strengthen the protective factors against substance abuse.

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